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# Examiner's Report Principal Examiner Feedback

## Summer 2018

Pearson Edexcel GCSE  
In Religious Studies B (3RB0)  
Paper 2B Christianity

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## Introduction

GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies  
Religious Studies B - Beliefs in Action  
Paper 2: Area of Study 2 – Religion, Peace and Conflict  
Option 2B – Christianity

This paper contributes to 50% of the overall qualification. The short course paper includes two questions, each covering a section of the specification. Candidates are expected to answer both questions, there is no element of choice on the paper. The details of the assessment content is provided in the short courses specification. Centres are expected to use the short course Edexcel specification rather than the full course specification or other published resources when planning and teaching the course content. The examination is set from the short course specification. This paper allows an in depth study of Christianity as a lived religion within the United Kingdom, and its beliefs and teachings on life specifically about the issues of peace and conflict and crime and punishment. This unit engages the interest of young people, as it addresses many Christian beliefs and teachings in addition to some issues affecting young people today.

### 3RBO\_2B\_Q1a

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Christian Beliefs Bullet point 1.7  
- The problem of evil/suffering

The question asked was:

'Outline **three** ways suffering causes problems for Christians.'

The candidates needed to provide ways, not reasons, and the ways could have been practical or theoretical. Examiners awarded one mark for each point identified and written in a sentence.

Examiner Tip:

- Lists gain a maximum of 1 mark. Candidates need to provide an outline and therefore should write in full sentences.
- Teachers should refer to the specification for likely questions.
- Candidates should make sure they have three distinct sentences.

### 3RBO\_2B\_Q1b

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Christian Beliefs Bullet point 1.1  
– The Trinity

The question asked was:

'Explain **two** ways belief in the Trinity is shown in Christian worship.'

Candidates are asked to 'Explain two' on (b) items. Therefore, two reasons are required, and both need to be developed to be awarded 4 marks. Development consists of a piece of extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom, a quote or examples. The development must be of the reason given and to the question asked.

This question proved difficult for candidates who failed to read the question carefully and ignored the part of the question stipulating it requires the ways Trinity is shown in Christian worship and instead described the Trinity.

Examiner Tip:

Generic information about crossing out:

- When candidates have given two answers and crossed out the first, the answer was replaced and then examiners mark the replacement answer.
- If the crossed-out answer was correct and the replacement is incorrect marks are not awarded. The candidate has chosen to give the wrong answer.
- If the candidate crosses out a correct answer, and does not offer a replacement and we can read through the crossing out, it is possible to award marks.

### **3RBO\_2B\_Q1c**

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Christian Beliefs  
Bullet point 1.2 – The creation of the universe

The question asked was:

'Explain **two** ways the Bible describes the creation of the universe.'

Candidates are asked to 'Explain **two**' on (c) items. Therefore, two reasons were required, and both needed to be developed for 4 marks. Development consists of a piece of extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom, a quote or examples. The development must relate to the reason given and to the question asked.

The reasons then should be supported with a 'reference to a source of wisdom', this must support the reason given and cannot be awarded twice. Therefore, if it is used as development it does not gain a second mark for the source.

Generic advice for centres to what constitutes a source of wisdom:

The candidates do not have to reference a quote or quote it word for word.

- If examiners are unsure they will use a search engine. Enter the gist of the paraphrase and 'Bible' or 'Christian teaching'.
- If the candidate states that it is in John 1: 18 and then states another verse from John – then this can be awarded. Candidate are not expected to know to 'verses' but if they identify a book it must be the correct book.
- If the candidate gives the paraphrase and then puts (John 1:18) in brackets the paraphrase can have the mark and the bracketed reference is ignored.
- If a candidate quotes Jesus and it was Paul or vice versa; and the quote is not accredited to them, it is not awarded.

Information about the creation of Adam and Eve cannot be credited as this is about creation of humanity not creation of the universe.

Examiner Tip:

- Candidates must learn sources of wisdom and be able to use them accurately and in context.
- Generic information - Sources of wisdom and authority
- The source must support the reason/teaching/belief/way given. Sources are checked using a search engine - type it in follow by the word Bible or Jesus (according to who the answer attributes it to). If the source is attributed to the wrong person/source/ numerical reference it cannot be credited e.g. a Pauline quote attributed to Jesus it cannot be credited. Numerical references on their own are not credited the candidate must use it correctly e.g. not just write John 10: 10.  
The source of wisdom can be given as a recognisable paraphrase.

### **3RBO\_2B\_Q01d**

The focus of the marking changes from AO1 to AO2 on the (d) items.

The candidates are being assessed on AO2: Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence.

AO2 constitutes 50% of the overall mark.

The question is '**Evaluate**' this statement **considering the arguments for and against** and reach a **justified conclusion** – there must some consideration of the validity of the arguments used / appraisal to gain the higher grades. Many candidates produced excellent answers giving reasons for and against but failed to evaluate the credibility of the argument. Formulas and writing frames restricted the flow of the arguments restricting candidate's progression to the higher levels.

(d) items are marked using levels and awarding is carried out using 'best fit' according to the level descriptors.

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Christian Beliefs  
Bullet point 1.5 – The nature and significance of salvation and the role of Christ within salvation

The question asked:

‘Atonement is all that is needed for people to be saved.’

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Christian teachings
- reach a justified conclusion.’

Please note that, neither in the bullet point, nor on the question are candidates required to give a non-religious response.  
The statement was about the different understandings about salvation and whether atonement is needed or not. Better candidates referred to the sacrificial death of Jesus and faith shown by action and candidates who struggled generally misunderstood the concept of atonement.

Examiner Tip:

- Candidates must ensure they address all the bullet points in the question.
- Candidates should not refer to material that is not asked for - if a question does not ask for a non- religious response and the candidate provides it this part of the answer will not gain any credit.
- Candidates should ensure they take opportunities to assess and analyse the validity of the evidence supporting the statement.

### **3RA0\_2B\_Q2a**

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Crime and Punishment  
Bullet point 2.4 – Christian attitudes towards punishment.

The question asked was:

‘Outline **three** Christian teachings about punishment.’

The candidates needed to provide any Christian teaching, not specifically Bible teachings or any other form of source of wisdom.

Some candidates may answer using a list which is not an outline and thus can only receive 1 mark according to the mark scheme.

It does not make any difference whether a candidate uses bullet points or not.

Examiner Tip:

- It helps candidates and examiners if candidates record each teaching separately.
- Some candidates may answer using a list which is not an outline and thus can only receive 1 mark according to the mark scheme.
- An outline must be more than one word, or item of knowledge.

### 3RBO\_2B\_Q2b

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Crime and Punishment  
Bullet point 2.7 – Christian teachings about the treatment of criminals.

The question asked was:

‘Explain **two** Christian teachings about the treatment of criminals.’

Candidates are asked to ‘Explain **two**’ on (b) items. Therefore, two reasons are required, and both need to be developed to be awarded 4 marks. Development consists of a piece of extra information, a reference to a source of wisdom a quotes or examples. The development must be of the reason given and to the question asked.

It appears that many candidates were not able to provide development for this question, it is important that candidates know the teachings and are able to explain them and give examples of their use.

Examiner Tip:

- It helps to write answers which divide into 2 paragraphs each containing a reason and a development.
- A source can be accepted as a development of a reason.

### 3RBO\_2B\_Q2c

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Crime and Punishment  
Bullet point 2.3 – Christian teachings about good evil and suffering.

The question asked was

‘Explain **two** ways Christians explain why people suffer.’

Candidates are asked to ‘Explain **two**’ on (c) items. Therefore, two reasons are required, and both need to be developed to be awarded 4 marks. They must also correctly use a source of wisdom in their answer which must be identifiable, relevant and linked to the way given in the answer.

Candidates giving better answers referred to free will, moral and natural evil. Less able candidates tried to shoehorn in the inconsistent triad and they gained no marks.

Examiner Tip:

- Candidate must be prepared for the whole breadth and depth of the specification in order to achieve higher grades. It is best to check that materials used in center cover the specification.
- The source of wisdom must be relevant and used as part of the candidates reasoning.

### 3RBO\_2B\_Q2d

The focus of the marking is AO2 on the (d) items. As explained in the specification this means: Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence.  
AO2 constitutes 50% of the overall mark.

The question asks candidates to '**Evaluate**' this statement **considering the arguments for and against** and reach a **justified conclusion** – there must be some consideration of the validity of the arguments used / appraisal to gain the higher grades. Many candidates produced excellent answers giving reasons for and against but failed to evaluate the credibility of the argument. Formulas and writing frames restricted the flow of the arguments restricting candidate's progression to the higher levels.

(d) items are marked using levels and awarding is carried out using 'best fit' according to the level descriptors.

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: Crime and Punishment  
Bullet point 2.1 – Christian attitudes towards justice.

The question asked was:

'Justice is important for victims.'

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Christian teachings
- refer to non-religious points of view
- reach a justified conclusion.'

Candidates needed to have a greater understanding of the concept.

Please note that candidates were required to give a non-religious response, this did not have to be specifically Humanist or atheist.

The statement was designed to evaluate different understandings about justice and whether it is needed for victims specifically or not, better candidates referred to justice and were able to refer to biblical examples and explain that biblical evidence gave the answer weight and candidates who struggled misunderstood the concept of justice or did not refer to the victim rather referred to the perpetrator.

It is really important to use the level descriptors to find the level rather than look for number of facts - these are AO1.



### Examiner Tip:

- There are many different ways to answer (d) items and gain marks, a template will not assure good marks.
- Do not try to point mark (d) answers. They should be read completely and then assessed against the level descriptors to find a best fit.
- Appraisal shows the value of the evidence provided / the strength of the answer / the validity of the chains in the answer/ a consideration of what is written in order to answer the questions ( rather than which side they agree with) / a measurement of which side is more logical / an assessment of which is the more compelling argument / an understanding of which argument is more convincing or rational or cogent.

### Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Answer (a) items in outlines, ie full sentences
- Provide 3 sentences for (a) items , each of which on a separate line
- (b) items should have 2 developed reasons, not more than 2
- development may be (i) examples, (ii) quotes, (iii) extra relevant material
- development must link to the reason given and still answer the question set
- (c) items are similar to (b) items but should also use a source as a fifth element
- the source of wisdom may be a paraphrase but should be identifiable
- the source of wisdom must be linked to the reason given
- (d) item responses must show AO2 skills to get high marks
- (d) items must show an appraisal of the argument not simply rely of a set format
- Level descriptors should be used to mark (d) items not point marking